SOME
STRICTURES
ON A
FEW PLACES
OF THE LATE
Reverend Mr. *Hervey*'s Letters
TO THE
Reverend Mr. *John Wesley*.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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Some *STRICTURES*

On a few Places, &c.

WITH regard to theſe letters in general, I don't think that the *writer* has every where treated Mr. Weſley, as became ſo *pious* and *ſenſible* a chriſtian as Mr. Hervey. He frequently animadverts with great *acrimony*, on that Gentleman's *omiſſions* and *miſ-quotations*; which a proper degree of *candour* might well have aſcribed to cauſes very *excuſable*. Upon one occaſion, in particular, he ſeems to loſe all *patience*, *decency* and *moderation*, for he challenges his old worthy *tutor* with no leſs a crime, than the want of *common honeſty*. p. 285. A very *heavy charge* indeed! Would not a reader here expect ſome *flagrant inſtance* of downright *villainy?* —— Behold; here it is! Mr. Hervey ſuppoſes himſelf charged with believing, —— "that *Chriſt* died for "*all mankind!*"

But

But do not the *ſacred oracles* themſelves declare——"that *Chriſt* taſted death for *every one?*"

Undoubtedly they do.——However that "*Chriſt* ſhould taſte death for *all mankind*"——Mr. Hervey reſents as highly "*injurious to the* "*ſenſe of his words*, p. 286.

Mr. Weſley has ſufficiently defended himſelf; and ſhewn that the *charge* brought againſt him is without foundation: but my buſineſs is with the *ſenſe* of Mr. Hervey's *words*, as maintained by himſelf.——Now, if it be *injurious* to the *ſenſe of his words*, "that *Chriſt* taſted death for *all mankind*," then the *ſenſe of his words* muſt be ——"that *Chriſt* only died for a *ſelect number*." Pray, what is this, but *abſolute predeſtination?* And therefore though *abſolute predeſtination* be not to be found in his *dialogues* or *letters*, p. 185: Yet if the *real ſenſe*, if the *expreſs meaning* of thoſe *two words* be there found, what matter of *triumph* is it, that the *words themſelves* are not there? Does not this gentleman evidently *own* the *doctrine*, whilſt he *diſowns* the *words?* Is he not highly offended at the ſuppoſition of holding the *contrary opinion?* What end then can it anſwer, to take refuge in avoiding the *ſound* of *thoſe words*, whilſt the *ſenſe* of them is ſo plainly maintained? Beſides

ſides, this *caution* and *reſerve* are the more extraordinary in Mr. Hervey, becauſe he tells Mr. Weſley, by way of reproof—that "what "we *believe* ſhould be ſpoken *confidently* and *in-* "*ceſſantly*, *in ſeaſon* and *out of ſeaſon*." p. 237. Now, had Mr. Hervey here acted conſiſtently with himſelf, he would not have ſcrupled to have mentioned *abſolute predeſtination* in *expreſs terms*: nay, he could not have been afraid to have mentioned even *reprobation itſelf*, which is an *eſſential branch* of the other. Indeed the *ſound* of This is ſo very *ſhocking*, that ſome have made uſe of *ſoft words* and *phraſes* to cover the *deformity* of it. But, alas! *Reprobation*, whether called——*dereliction* or *præterition*—— a *leaving* or *forſaking*, or a *paſſing by*——is ſtill *reprobation!* And *reprobation* robs God of his *darling attributes*, —— *Love*, *Mercy* and *Goodneſs*.———Thus as in *tranſubſtantiation*, the man *makes* his god; ſo in the doctrine of *reprobation*, the man *unmakes* him. ——— I pray God preſerve every good man from both!

As to Mr. Hervey's plea, p. 287, "That many paſſages in ſcripture ſeem, at leaſt, to countenance this *obnoxious tenet*;"—— it may be replied,——"that many expreſs *paſſages* in *ſcripture* ſeem, at leaſt, to countenance the doctrine of *tranſubſtantiation*." Nor will it more

avail to ſay, —— " That many perſons emi-
" nent for their learning, and exemplary in
" their lives, have written in defence of it,
and bled for the confirmation of it."——ibid.
This is a proof undoubtedly, that thoſe good
men *believed* it ; but not the leaſt proof, that
the *doctrine* was *true*.

Was not the miſerable *Vanini* burnt at *Tou-
louſe* for *Atheiſm?* And the unhappy *Servetus*
burnt at *Geneva*, for denying the *proper divinity*
of the Son of God ? ——— Therefore *bleeding*
for opinions is no proof that ſuch opinions
are right.———We might appeal for the truth
of this obſervation to *Calvin* himſelf, who diſ-
covered his zeal againſt poor *Servetus* in pro-
moting his cruel death. ——— *Cruel* beyond
imagination ! for he was burnt with *green
wood* to encreaſe his *torture!*——Indeed ſuch a
fiery ſpirit agrees well with *ſuch* a *doctrine !* For
to believe that God —— the *gracious*, the *kind*,
the *merciful* God —— Nay, the *God* who is
love itſelf——ſhould from all eternity have de-
creed the *inevitable damnation* of unſpeakable
numbers of his *helpleſs creatures*, without *any
fault of their own* : — Such a *belief* ſeems only
worthy of thoſe, who have loſt all the *feelings*
and *tenderneſs* of *humanity !* And it is pity
that any one elſe ſhould hold or maintain
it !

At p. 288. Mr. Hervey thus addreſſes himſelf to Mr. Weſley——" You ſuppoſe that accord-
" ding to the *Calviniſtic* ſcheme, God denies
" what is neceſſary for preſent comfort and fi-
" nal acceptance, even to ſome who *ſincerely*
" ſeek it. This is contrary to *ſcripture*, and
" and no leſs contrary to the doctrine of your
" *opponents*."

That it is *contrary* to *ſcripture* will not be conteſted by Mr. Weſley:——And moreover, I believe it may be contrary to the doctrine of moſt of his *opponents*; who will not, I preſume, allow that any one, except the *elect* only, can *ſincerely* ſeek. However, it may be a queſtion, whether ſome of them may not follow that great *champion* of *abſolute predeſtination*, St. Auſtin; who ſuppoſed, " that even
" *reprobates* might have *true grace*: though, un-
" leſs they are *predeſtinated*, they will *fall* from
" it."* Now ſurely, whilſt a man has *true grace*, he may *ſincerely ſeek*: —— and with all due ſubmiſſion both to St. *Auſtin* and *Calvin*, he may ſurely *find*.———St. Matth. vii. 7.

However, if all the *Calviniſts* have here deſerted St. *Auſtin*, I cannot conceive that they have, in any degree, *mended* the matter: for though a perſuaſion, that we cannot finally fall will give us moſt *joy* and *pleaſure*; yet a *fear*

of

* See *Biſhop Burnet* on art. 17. p. 149.

of the contrary will never *lull* us into a *fatal ſecurity*.

We proceed now to ſome farther attacks upon Mr. Weſley. ——— " To confirm your-
" ſelf, ſays Mr. Hervey, in this *miſapprehen-*
" *ſion*, you aſk ——— Would *you* deny it to
" any, if it were in your power ? " ——— p. 288.

Truly, I cannot help thinking this a very *proper queſtion :* for ſurely that man muſt have diveſted himſelf of all *humanity*, who ſhould anſwer —— " that he would *deny* help to any
" in his power."

However, Mr. Hervey undertakes to ſhew the *error* and *fallacy* of this queſtion. In order to this, he gives, in *his lively* manner, a ſhort repreſentation of the melancholy deſtruction of Admiral *Broderick's ſhip* and *whole crew* ; ſome of whom periſhed by dreadful *flames*, and others were ſwallowed up by the *deep !* —— And then he thus expoſtulates ——— " What
" ſay you, ſir, to this diſmal narrative ? Does
" not your heart bleed ? Would you have ſtood
" by, and denied your ſuccour, if it had been
" in your power to help ? Would not you have
" done your utmoſt to have prevented the fatal
" *cataſtrophe ?* Yet the Lord ſaw this extreme
" diſtreſs. He heard their piteous moans. He

was

" was able to ſave them, yet withdrew his aſ-
" ſiſtance. Now, becauſe you *would* gladly have
" ſuccoured them, if you *cou'd*; and God Almigh-
" ty *could*, but *would* not ſend them aid; will you
" therefore conclude, that *you* are above your
" Lord; and that your loving-kindneſs was
" greater than his?"

" I will not offer to charge any ſuch conſe-
quences upon you. I am perſuaded you abhor
the thought."

I here entirely join with Mr. Hervey; and am fully perſuaded he judges right of Mr. Weſley.——He has too high a ſenſe of the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of God, to *charge God fool-iſhly*, on account of any *alarming providence* whatever: and yet at the ſame time, Mr. Weſley would have thought it his *indiſpenſable duty* to have given his diſtreſſed brethren all the aſſiſtance and ſuccour that were in his power. But let us, for a moment, examine, whether *divine Providence* cannot here be fully vindicated, without giving the moſt diſtant help to the *Calviniſtic ſcheme?* Let us ſuppoſe then, which ſurely we may do, without the *leaſt breach* of *charity*, that in this large multitude, —— " Some were *incorrigible ſinners*, that
" they had long withſtood the offers of *di-*
" *vine grace*, and had *filled up the meaſure* of
their iniquities:"——here then was only a

juſt

juſt puniſhment for their *own perſonal guilt.*——— Nay, let it be ſuppoſed (as it were greatly to be wiſhed) " that *All* were in a ſtate of *reconcilia-* " *tion* with God ;"——What *injury* was then done to theſe men,——" *to remove them from* " *earth to heaven* ; *from toil and ſuffering, to a* " *kingdom of everlaſting reſt and peace?*" So that upon either ſuppoſition, what affinity has This with the doctrine of *abſolute predeſtination ?* What has This to do with a *doctrine*, which ſuppoſes *millions* of ſouls condemned to *everlaſting torments* for what they neither *did* themſelves, nor could poſſibly *prevent ?*

Again, Mr. Hervey having ſaid, p. 294, that ——" *God is a boundleſs ocean of good.*"——Mr. Weſley replies——" *Nay, that ocean is far from boundleſs ; if it wholly paſſes by nine tenths of mankind.*"

To this, Mr. Hervey thus remonſtrates,—" What, if it had paſſed by *all* mankind, as it " certainly did all the *devils*, would it have " been the *leſs boundleſs* on that account ?"

I beg leave here to obſerve, that St. Paul makes a wide difference between the *goodneſs* and *ſeverity* of God ; as well as between the occaſion of them. Rom. xi. 19—23.

And therefore had this been the caſe ;——" that *all mankind were paſſed by* ;"——Surely, inſtead of ſaying, " Where ſin abounded, grace did

" did much more abound;" Rom. v. 20——— He would probably have ſaid, " *Where ſin abounded*, there the *ſeverity of God did equally abound.*" That *accurate* writer would never have ſpread ſuch confuſion in our *ideas*, as to repreſent *grace* and *ſeverity* as the *ſame thing*. ———Nor does the Almighty (who appeals to *our reaſon* for the *juſtice* and *equity* of his dealings with us) want any of our *miſtakes* or *compliments*, to vindicate his *grace* and *goodneſs*.

But now further, as to " the *infernal ſpirits being all paſſed by*,"———I thought it was agreed amongſt all Divines, that Thoſe *unhappy ſpirits* ſuffered for their *own perſonal guilt*:——— And therefore what has this to do with the *Calviniſtic ſcheme*?——But further I muſt obſerve, that Mr. Hervey ſometimes puts me in mind of that great and excellent reformer, Luther; who, though in ſome of his *expreſſions*, an arrant *Antinomian*; yet in *life* and *practice*, the very *reverſe*. For inſtance, What can be more in the *Antinomian* ſtyle, than this ſentence of Mr. Hervey———" *Believers*, who are *notorious tranſgreſſors* in themſelves, have a *ſinleſs obedience* in Chriſt." p. 191.

I beſeech you, What kind of *believers* are *theſe*?

Not *goſpel-believers* ſurely!—The *Faith* of theſe *overcomes the world*. 1. St. *John* v. 4.

Whereas Mr. Hervey's *Believers* are *notorious Trangreſſors!* However for their greater *encouragement* in ſin (tho' Mr. *Hervey* meant it not) they may *rely on a ſinleſs obedience* in *Chriſt!*

Glorious news for *notorious Trangreſſors!* Nor will his changing the word *notorious* into "*acknowledged, confeſſed,* and *indiſputably ſuch*" any way leſſen the encouragement.

For inſtance, I thus expoſtulate with a man, who is a *drunkard,* a *lewd* and *unrighteous* perſon.——I tell him,——"If the ſcriptures be "true, you cannot, in your preſent ſtate, *inherit the kingdom of God.*"———He ſmiles at my ignorance; and yet owns, that, in all theſe reſpects, he is a *notorious Tranſgreſſor.*—"I *acknowledge,*" ſays he, "and *confeſs,* that I "am *indiſputably ſuch:* but I have no *fears,* I "am under no *apprehenſions* of danger: for you "muſt know, that I am a *believer;* and that I "am therefore *ſafe*:——for I have a *ſinleſs* "*ſobriety,* a *ſinleſs holineſs,* and a *ſinleſs righteouſneſs in Chriſt.*"——However, I ſhould certainly venture to tell ſuch a one; My brother, you are under a *dreadful deluſion*: for the *ſinleſs obedience of Chriſt* will only avail Thoſe, "who *repent and turn to God; and do works* "*meet for repentence.*" Acts xxvi. 20. And further, I might add,———"Unleſs the *Spirit* "*of God open thy eyes,* and *turn thee from darkneſs*

" *neſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto* " *God,*"——thou wilt *continue* in thy ſins; and notwithſtanding all thy *boaſt* of being a *believer*, thou wilt certainly *periſh in them!*—— But ſuch too often are the *bleſſed effects of Antinomian doctrines!* Happy indeed would it be for all who hold them, if they receiv'd no more *poyſon* from them, than Mr. Hervey did! But This is not to be expected.

At P. 197, 198, Mr. Hervey brings many objections againſt the *opinion*, that " *Paradiſe* and the *third heaven* mean *different* places."

It ſeems, if this notion be true, " St. *Paul* has told his ſtory but *aukwardly*; by *firſt* mentioning his arrival at the *third heaven*, and then at *Paradiſe.*"

But what if St. *Paul* was *twice* taken up,—— the firſt time——into the *third heaven*; and next——into *Paradiſe*; then he only mentions the *order* of the *events*:——and where is the *aukwardneſs* of this *narrative?* And *This* might certainly be the caſe; tho' Mr. *Hervey* repreſents a *ſaint's* waiting in *Paradiſe*, as if it were " waiting in a kind of *lobby* to the *heaven of* " *heavens.*"——Such a manner of expreſſion is hardly *grave* enough for the ſubject. But poor Mr. Weſley is here *ſeverely corrected* for holding this opinion: tho' he has many *ancients* and *moderns* with him, " This, ſays Mr. Her- " vey is the *Popiſh* notion,——and ſo cloſely

" connected with the *chimera* of *purgatory*, that " if you take away the former, the latter drops " into *nothing*." And then Mr. Hervey expreſſes his ſorrow, that " Mr. Weſley's opinions " are ſo much like the *errors* of the *man of* Sin." However, it muſt be obſerv'd, that Mr. Hervey here acquits him of every thing but *Ignorance!* " In this, ſays Mr. Hervey, you ſeem to err, *not* " *knowing* the *ſcripture*."—Then he has certainly *erred* with *good company:* for *thus* thought the learned and pious *Biſhop Bull*; *thus* thought the learned and pious Dr. *Doddridge:* and *thus* thought, ſays the learned Dr. *Whitby*, " *All the Ancient Chriſtians!*" 2 Cor. xii. 4. But further, how would a learned *Romaniſt* ſmile to hear that *purgatory* muſt *drop into nothing*, upon the *contrary ſuppoſition?* As if a *Soul* would want *leſs* of the *fire of purgatory* to be admitted into the *third heaven*, than into *Paradiſe!*—— The *Romiſh purgatory* is not *thus* to be *aboliſhed!*

At P. 229. Mr. Hervey, in order to induce Mr. Weſley to retract a *ſentiment*, which appears to him a *miſtaken* one, very generouſly offers, " *to break the ice and lead the way.*" He there publickly diſclaims the following three lines of poetry, which he had formerly wrote in honour to a *generous benefactor*.

" *Our wants reliev'd by thy indulgent care,*
" *Shall give thee courage at the dreadful bar,*
" *And ſtud the crown thou ſhalt for ever wear.*"

Now, notwithſtanding nothing is more abſurd and contrary to the *goſpel*, than to ſuppoſe that *alms deeds* will *cover a multitude of Sins*, or indeed *any one Sin* whatever; yet where *acts* of *benevolence* proceed from a real principle of *divine love* to *Chriſt*, and to his *diſciples* for *his ſake*, they will certainly hereafter be taken notice of by *Chriſt* himſelf.——Even "a *cup of water* thus beſtow'd, *ſhall not loſe its reward.*" St. Mark ix. 31.

And therefore ſuppoſing that *theſe* were the *views* and *motives* and *principles* of that generous perſon, I cannot ſee the leaſt reaſon for *retracting* thoſe lines of *gratitude*. However, too much care cannot be taken to guard a *vain world* againſt *ſelf-confidence* and *ſelf-righteouſneſs*.

At P. 261, Mr. Hervey enters upon a very *arduous* taſk! But which cannot fail of being highly agreeable to the *polite* and *gay* world.

He firſt obſerves, that "Mr. Weſley is diſ-
"pleaſed with what he finds mentioned con-
"cerning gems."

Mr. Hervey, in his dialogues, had introduced *Theron* thus ſpeaking of *precious ſtones*;——

"*Gems*, when nicely poliſhed and prodigal
"of their luſtre, they ſtand candidates for a
"ſeat on the *virtuous* fair ones breaſt."

Mr. Weſley, amongſt other objections, ſays, "He cannot reconcile this with St. Paul's "words,——"Not with *pearls*: and by a pa-
"rity of reaſon, not with *diamonds*."

To

To this, Mr. Hervey replies, " Do you " rightly underſtand St. *Paul?* Don't you " dwindle his manly and noble idea, into a " meanneſs and littleneſs of ſenſe? Such as befits " the ſuperſtitions and contracted ſpirit of a " *hermit*, rather than the generous and exalted " temper of a *believer*; *who ſtands faſt in the li-* " *berty, wherewith Chriſt hath made him free.*" P. 262. Mr. Hervey adds many things more upon this occaſion, of the like import, which may fortify every *virtuous fair one* againſt ſcrupling theſe *Chriſtian Ornaments.*

So that ſhould an honeſt old *Hermit* tell them, " that not only the two *great apoſtles* ſeem plain- " ly to diſcourage theſe *ornaments*; but that the " wiſeſt of the *ancient ſages*, both amongſt *Jews* " and *Gentiles* are in the ſame ſentiments; and " that the *Jewiſh* ladies ſtand expreſsly condemn- " ed for their *noſe-jewels* and other ſtately " *trinkets.*" *Iſaiah* iii. 18——23.

Yet how eaſily might any *modern ladies*, ſilence this poor old *recluſe*?

" We are *Chriſtians*," they might reply, " and " therefore have nothing to do with *Jewiſh* or *Pa-* " *gan philoſophers*:" and beſides they might add, " —There is a wide difference between *jewels*, " hanging at the *noſe* of thoſe ladies, and the *jewels* " which adorn the *breaſt* of a *chriſtian believer.* " And as to the *apoſtles*, to ſuppoſe that they " condemn'd theſe *ornaments*,——This is only " *dwindling* their *manly* and *noble ideas*, into a " *mean-*

" *meanneſs* and *littleneſs* of ſenſe, altogether un-
" becoming of them; and that therefore they
" are reſolved to *make uſe of* their *chriſtian* li-
" berty; and thus *act up* to the *generous* and
" *exalted temper* of *believers!*"——Thus may any *vain*, *gay* creature imagine, " that This
" is only a part of That *glorious liberty*, with
" which *Chriſt has made her free!*"

Thus has Mr. Hervey, (though very far from deſigning it) done a great deal too much towards hardening the *gay world* in their *pride*, *folly*, and *vanity!*——How much more becoming his *ſenſe* and *character* would it have been, to have ſet forth the dreadful danger of theſe *ſhining toys* to the many thouſands who wear them!

For if it ſhould appear hereafter, that the *jewels* which *adorned their breaſts*, might have *fed and cloathed* a multitude of the *ſtarving* brethren of *Jeſus Chriſt*; whilſt ſuch ornaments only carried their *own ſouls* farther from *God*, and their *hearts* from *heaven*; it would have been better " for them, to have had a *mill-*
" *ſtone* hanged about their neck, and they them-
" ſelves caſt into the ſea!" St. Math. xxv. 41, —46.

But now, as to Mr. Hervey's ſuppoſition, p. 264.—— " that there is no more danger to
" *nobles* of either ſex, from their *ſumptuous robes*,
" and *coronets glittering* with *jewels*, than there
" is to a *divine* from a *beaver hat* or a *prunel'a*
" *gown*;"—— I believe there are few *wiſe nobles*, but who would *ſmile* at their *chaplains* for

preaching ſuch *polite doctrines!*——However, be this as it may, I doubt not but Mr. Weſley entirely agrees with Mr. Hervey, "That the "*love of God* is a *better guard* againſt *luxury* and "*ſenſuality*, than all the *rigid rules* of the *cloyſter* "or monaſtery." P. 268.

But then the true point is,——"whether "ſuch *ſplendid ornaments*, as have a *real tendency* "to *cheriſh* thoſe corruptions of the heart, will "not too often *prevent* the *love of God* from en-"tring there at firſt, or rob the Heart of it after-"wards?"

For where *the love of the world is*, there the *love of God is* not. 1. St. *John* ii. 15.

And now, as the way to heaven is thus *ſmoothed* for Thoſe who are adorned with *gold* and *precious ſtones*, ſo is the appearance of the *ſelf-denying precepts* of the *goſpel* render'd highly *agreeable* to Thoſe, who *fare ſumptuouſly every day!*

Mr. Weſley had obſerved, that Mr. Hervey's manner of mentioning ſome of the delightful bounties of *providence*; — ſuch as "the *exquiſite reliſh* of *Turbot*, and the *deliciouſneſs* of *Sturgeon*,——was a ſtrong encouragement of *luxury* and *ſenſuality*." P. 266 and 268. But tho' Mr. Hervey has indeed taken a great deal of ingenious pains to defend himſelf from P. 266. to 269, I muſt think, that his *deſcription* of theſe *dainties* may prove more *dangerous* than he apprehended: even tho' he obſerves, P. 266, that "the *apoſtle*, "in one ſentence, expreſſes abundantly more, "than his three volumes contain;"——viz——"*He giveth us all things richly to enjoy.*"

I very readily agree that the *apoſtle's ſentence expreſſes abundantly more*, than is often underſtood. The *gifts* of God are undoubtedly *rich*; and he *richly* beſtows them on us. But I ſhould be glad to be inform'd, —— which of theſe two perſons *enjoy* them in the *richeſt* manner, and moſt *agreeably* to the *will* and *deſign* of the *great* and *bountiful donor*; ——whether the man, who delights to gratify his *ſenſual appetite* with the *exquiſite reliſh* of his food: ——or the man, who chuſes the *plaineſt diet*, that he may have the more wherewith *to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked?* ———Surely this *mortified chriſtian* acts much more *agreeably* to the *will* of God; and conſequently more *agreeably* to the *meaning* of the great *apoſtle*.

And further, I muſt obſerve, how widely different is the *method* taken by Mr. Hervey, from the inſtructions given by the *wiſe man*. ——— For inſtead of *ſublime ſpeculations* on "the *redneſs* "of the *wine*, *when it giveth its colour* in the cup; "when *it moveth itſelf aright*;"—inſtead of this *dangerous philoſophizing*, — he wiſely *warns* his ſon, ——— "not ſo much as to *look* upon it;" leſt, "at the laſt, it *bite* like a *ſerpent*, and *ſting* like an *adder*." ——— *Prov.* xxiii. 31, 32.

It is therefore ſubmitted to every *ſenſible* and *unprejudiced* perſon, whether ſuch *cautions* are not much better ſuited for a *voluptuous* age, than the admiring its *beautiful appearance*, or *exquiſite flavour*? I am inclined to think, that if the *wiſe man's* counſel was followed at *moſt feſtivals* (perhaps *none* need be excepted) it might enable many

many to *love* and *admire* their *great Benefactor*, much more *rationally* and much more *religiouſly* than I fear is generally the caſe.

And tho' Mr. Weſley ſeems to Mr. Hervey—"to be a kind of *male-content* with regard to "our *ſpiritual liberties*, which are conſign'd "over to us, in the *Magna Charta* of the goſ-"pel;" P. 268. Yet I beg leave to be of opinion, that if the *ſelf-denying* doctrines of the *goſpel* had a larger poſſeſſion of our hearts, the *great charter* of it would be much ſeldomer *infringed* than it is at preſent.

The laſt thing I ſhall take particular notice of, is Mr. Hervey's declaring, "that the *privi-"leges* of the *goſpel* are ours, without perform-"ing *any conditions*, or ſeeking *any pre-requiſites*." P. 269.

On the contrary, the *goſpel* appears to me even to *abound* with *conditions* and *pre-requiſites*.

The very beginning of our holy Lord's preaching is an *expreſs contradiction* to Mr. Hervey's ſentiment. "Repent ye, ſays *Chriſt*, and *believe* the goſpel."——St. *Mark* i. 15. Are not therefore *repentance* and *faith* two *conditions* and *pre-requiſites?* Or can the *priveleges* of the *goſpel* be enjoyed without them?

Again,——"*Aſk*, ſays our holy Lord, and it ſhall be given you; *Seek*, and ye ſhall find." St. Math. vii. 7. Are not therefore *aſking* and *ſeeking* the expreſs *conditions* or *pre-requiſites* of *giving*, on the part of God; and of *receiving* on our parts?

And farther, we are aſſured by our bleſſed Saviour,—"not every one, that ſaith unto me,

" Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of " heaven ; but he that doth the will of my Fa- " ther, which is in heaven."———v. 21.

Now, can there be a more *expreſs declaration*, — that the *doing* the divine will is a *condition* or *pre-requiſite* for *entering* into the *kingdom of heaven.*

" Be thou *faithful unto death*, ſays *Chriſt*, " and I will give thee a *crown of life.*" *Rev.* ii. 10.

Therefore is not *faithfulneſs unto death*—the *expreſs condition* of obtaining the *crown of life?*

Again, our holy Lord thus promiſes, " to " him that *overcometh*, will I give to eat of the " *tree of life*". And—" to *him*, that *over-* " *cometh*, will I give to eat of the *hidden manna.*" Chap. ii. 7. 17. But now, can any thing be plainer, than that *overcoming* is the *condition* or *pre-requiſite* for enjoying theſe glorious promiſes.

All theſe paſſages and many others are directly contrary to Mr. Hervey's ſentiments ; ſo that I ſhall mention only two more. But what may appear ſomething ſurprizing, they are what he himſelf quotes to confirm his opinion.

The firſt is taken from the prophet Iſaiah ; lv. 1. and contains a gracious invitation from *Chriſt* ;—" come, buy wine and milk, without " money and without price." Here is *nothing* indeed to be paid ; for they are entirely *free gifts:* but is not the firſt word—*Come—a condition*, or *pre-requiſite?* Or may a *careleſs drone* obtain the bleſſing without *coming?*—I fear *thouſands* have loſt it, by this very *Deluſion*!

The next quotation is quite parallel to this ; and contains alſo the *free offers* of *divine grace* from the *Lord Jeſus :*—" whoſoever *will*, let him take the *water of life* freely."—*Rev.* xxii. 17. But

is here no *condition* or *pre-requiſite*? Moſt certainly there is: for the offer is to *him* who is *willing*. So that, as the pious and learned *Paræus* obſerves,—" it is not forced upon the *un-*
" *willing*, the *lazy*, or thoſe who are *ſnor-*
" *ing*." It is allowed indeed, that they cannot be *willing* of themſelves: but yet *willing* they *muſt* be; or the *water of life*, is not theirs. ——— Conſequently the being *willing* is an indiſpenſable *condition* or *pre-requiſite*. And therefore it is ſubmitted, whether ſeveral expreſs declarations of Chriſt himſelf, do not *contradict* Mr. Hervey's aſſertion; and even the two laſt, which he produced to *confirm* it?

Upon the whole,———when we reflect on the *ſpirituality* and *ſtrictneſs* of the *goſpel of Chriſt*;—when we conſider that he himſelf has declared, " that *ſtrait* is the *gate*, and *nar-*
" *row* is the way which leadeth unto life"; and that he has commanded us " to take up
" our *Croſs* daily, and to follow him: and that
" even a *right-hand*, and a *right-eye* are to
" be parted with; and in ſhort, whatever would
" carry away our hearts from him; even tho'
" the neareſt and deareſt relation": and moreover, ſince he has expreſsly charged us,——
" to *watch*, and *pray*, leſt we enter into
" temptation, and *to abide in Him*, even as
" the *branches abide in the vine*; and to
" diſcover we are his *true diſciples*, by bear-
" ing *much fruit*." And moreover, ſince his *Holy Spirit* has directed, " that we ſhould
" be *dead unto ſin*; but *alive unto God*; and
" *transformed* by the *renewing of our minds*:——
" that we ſhould *perfect holineſs in the fear of God*;

" and *ſet our affections on things above*; that we " ſhould *give diligence* to make our *calling and* " *election ſure*; nay, that we give *all diligence* " to *add one divine grace to another*, and even to " *abound* in them;" for as much as it is the *deſign* of the *goſpel* that we ſhould " come to a " *perfect man*, to the *meaſure of the ſtature of the* " *fulneſs of Chriſt*."—And further, when we conſider the *high privileges* which *chriſtians* are called to —— " even to be *new creatures* in " *Chriſt Jeſus*; to be *temples* of the *Holy Ghoſt*; " to have *Chriſt dwelling in our hearts by faith*; " to be an *habitation of God thro' the Spirit*; to " *have fellowſhip with the Father, and with his* " *Son Jeſus Chriſt*; *to be partakers of the divine* " *nature*;—and even *to be filled with all the ful-* " *neſs of God!*"—I ſay when we deeply reflect on this *divine religion* of the *Lord Jeſus*; what *fervency*, what *proficiency*, and what *ſelf-denial* it requires; and withal, how little we can obſerve of it, even amongſt *profeſſing chriſtians*;—how *careful* ought wiſe and good men to be, leſt they inadvertently encourage a *love of the world*, or the *pride of life*; leſt they *ſooth* a *carnal heart*, or a *careleſs mind* into a *fatal ſecurity*; and leſt they hinder a *miſerable world*, (already too much *blinded*) from ſeeing the danger they are in from *numberleſs temptations!* how careful ſhould they be, leſt they harden any poor *wretched phariſee* in reſting ſatisfied with the *mere form of godlineſs*, without the *power* of it;—without earneſtly ſeeking to have the *inward kingdom of God* ſet up in their ſouls—*even righteouſneſs, peace* and *joy in the Holy Ghoſt!*

How far the late reverend Mr. Hervey may

have been betrayed (thro' want of *calm attention*) into ſomething of this kind, muſt be left to every *ſerious* and *unprejudiced* perſon to determine.

As to the *publication* of theſe letters, tho' they may contain little more, than what had been publiſh'd already; I mean as to *doctrine* or *ſentiment*; yet they are wrote in ſo *diſdainful*, *unkind* and *bitter* a manner, that it is pity they were ever ſent to the preſs; eſpecially as he himſelf had *expreſsly* forbid it.

Indeed, I don't wonder, that ſo *pious* and *ſenſible* a man ſhould, upon a *cool recollection*, give orders, that they ſhould not be *printed*.

It ſeem'd meet however to his friends, for *reaſons* which appear'd *weighty* to them, to break through his orders.——But tho' the *Editor* might only deſign the *honour* of his brother; yet as I apprehend *his brother* was much the beſt judge, "whether thoſe *warm* letters ſhould be *publiſhed* or not;" —— I wiſh the *publiſher* had modeſtly thought ſo too.

Theſe few *animadverſions* were not drawn up to traduce the memory of a worthy and good man, who is no longer able to ſpeak for himſelf. But they were drawn up at the requeſt of a friend, with no other view, than to guard againſt ſome particular notions, which appear to me no way agreeable to the *goſpel* of *Chriſt*; and which may prove (tho' far from being deſign'd) injurious to the ſouls of many.—Indeed, This miſerable *motly religion*, This *baſe mixture* of the *world* with the *divine goſpel* of *Chriſt*, is but too much the *taſte* of many, who ought to *know* and to *do* better!

F I N I S.

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